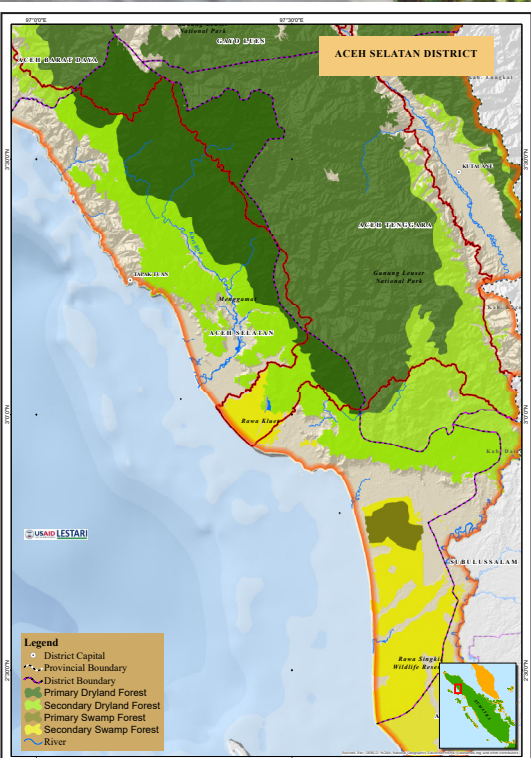




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MAKING A DIFFERENCE CAPTURING THE CHARISMATIC

Gunung Leuser National Park is the only place on earth that is home to tigers, orangutans, elephants and rhinos. To protect these species requires a clear understanding of their location and abundance. Yet, despite being cryptic and difficult to detect, recent fieldwork by USAID LESTARI team member Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has caught two of these charismatic species on camera: a Critically Endangered Sumatran tiger and a Critically Endangered Sumatran orangutan (Photo 1).

LESTARI is currently conducting the first widespread scientific assessment of a variety of threatened mammal species in the eastern side of Aceh Selatan District. Starting in May 2016, three survey teams consisting of personnel from WCS, Gunung Leuser National Park, Aceh Forestry Agency and local communities have deployed 100 paired camera traps (Photo 2). These cameras cover the main habitat types in Leuser; namely lowland, hill, submontane, and montane forest types. The heat-motion sensors on the camera traps automatically record any warm-bodied animal passing the camera. This enables them to detect a variety of species, including some of Southeast Asia's rarest such as the Sumatran serow, a type of mountain dwelling goat-antelope (Photo 1). A key aim of the study is to estimate the locations and density of the Sumatran tiger population. Each tiger has a unique and asymmetric stripe pattern on its right and left flanks, which makes it possible to identify one individual from another, which in turn enables the size of the population to be estimated.

The data generated will be analyzed to set a species baseline, allowing for the performance evaluation of project interventions such as SMART-based patrolling. Here, LESTARI is supporting seven ranger patrol teams to mitigate the principle threat of poaching. The teams, consisting of staff from Gunung Leuser National Park, WCS, and local communities, have destroyed 21 snare traps since LESTARI began. The camera trap results will be used to formulate the ranger patrolling strategy, as part of the project's on-going efforts to deliver meaningful change to protected area management in Indonesia.

Photo caption:

1. Photo Collage (clockwise from left to right):
 - A male Critically Endangered Sumatran tiger traversing a forest trail in the Leuser Landscape
 - A Critically Endangered Sumatran orangutan caught on camera inside the Leuser Landscape
 - Sumatran serow, a type of mountain dwelling goat-antelope
2. WCS-LESTARI staff setting a camera trap inside the Leuser rainforest
3. South Aceh District